Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee.
That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
And steep my senses in forgetfulness ?
Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs.
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
And hush'd with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber;
Than in the perfum'd chambers of the great.
Under the canopies of costly state,
And lull'd with sounds of sweetest melody ?
O thou dull god, why liest thou with the vile,
In loathsome beds; and leav'st the kingly couch.
A watch-case, or a common larum bell[9] ?
Wilt thou upon the high and giddy mast
Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious surge ;
And in the visitation of the winds,
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
With deaf'ning clamours in the slippery clouds [1]

9 *A watch-case, &c.*] This alludes to the watchman set in garrison-towns upon some eminence attending upon an alarum-bell, which was to ring out in case of fire or any approaching danger. He had a case or box to shelter him from the weather, but at his utmost peril he was not to sleep whilst he was upon duty. These alarum-bells are mentioned in several other places of Shakspeare. HANMER.

In an ancient inventory cited in Strutt's Angel-cynnan, vol. iii. p. 70, there is the following article: "Item a *laume* or WATCHE of iron *in an iron* CASE with 2 leaden plumets." Strutt supposes, and no doubt rightly, that *laume* is an error for *larum*. Something of this kind, I believe, is here intended by *watch-case*, since this speech does not afford any other expressions to induce the supposition that the King had a *sentry box* in his thoughts. HOLT WHITE.

1 —slippery CLOUDS.] The modern editors read *shrowds*, meaning the *rope ladders* by which the masts of ships are ascended. The old copy—^e in the slippery *clouds;* " but I know

not what advantage is gained by the alteration for *shrowds* had anciently the same meaning as *clouds*. I could bring many in,*